



Kids in Missouri Courts

Learn What
Happens in Court

An Activity and Coloring Book



What's in This Book?

Acknowledgements	2
Message from the Supreme Court	3
All About Me	4
What Courts Do	5
On My Way to Court	6
Why am I Here?	8
Who Are the People in Court?.....	10
Who Is in the Courtroom?.....	13
How Do I Act in Court?	14
I Am a Witness	16
Sometimes Kids Need to be Taken Care Of	17
Family Court	20
Write a Story About Court	21
Courthouse Rooms to Decorate	22
Who Are the People You are Connected To	24



Acknowledgements

The Supreme Court of Missouri's civic education committee extends its gratitude to the Judicial Council of California and the Wisconsin State Courts for the concept of an activity book designed to help children better understand the role of courts and thanks both organizations for granting permission to adapt their materials for use in Missouri.

The ***What's Happening In Court?*** children's activities booklet originally was produced in 1999 by staff of the Judicial Council of California and illustrated by San Francisco artists Andrew DeWitt and Robert Gutierrez. Their initial project was made possible with support from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Foundation of the State Bar of California. This booklet was updated in 2012 by the Judicial Council of California's Center for Families, Children & the Courts.

With permission, the activities booklet later was tailored for the Wisconsin courts by a group of Wisconsin trial court judges and others, with review and testing by students and teachers at a Janesville, Wisconsin, school. New graphics and layout were provided by Susan Kummer and Jim Good of Madison, Wisconsin. The Wisconsin version of ***What's Happening In Court?*** was published by the Supreme Court of Wisconsin with support from the Milwaukee Bar Association Inc.

The Supreme Court of Missouri's civic education committee is grateful for the tireless efforts in adapting the California and Wisconsin booklets for use in Missouri and in producing this new ***Kids in Missouri Courts*** activity and coloring book. Specifically, we thank the following judges for their vision and hard work in creating the content:

- Judge Patrick L. King (St. Francois County circuit court)
- Judge Patricia Breckenridge (Supreme Court of Missouri, retired)
- Judge Rebeca Navarro-McKelvey (Missouri Court of Appeals)
- Judge Nicolette Klapp (St. Louis County circuit court)

We also are thankful for the talents of Terri Norris and Kady Wynn (Missouri Office of State Courts Administrator), who gave our vision life through their design and graphics.

Kids in Missouri Courts has been adapted for free public use for the purpose of civic education. Please give credit to the Supreme Court of Missouri's civic education committee. For more information about the committee, or to schedule a presentation or visit from a judge, please visit <https://www.courts.mo.gov/CivicEducation/>.

Message from the Supreme Court of Missouri

Dear Families and Teachers:

Every day, all over the state, children come to our courthouses for all sorts of reasons. Going to court can be scary for adults as well as for children.

We want to make the experience of going to court easier on children by helping them to understand the process. This booklet explains what happens in court, who works here, and what the rules are. The booklet is for children ages 6 to 10 to use with help from a parent, teacher, attorney, or other caring adult.

We hope you and your children enjoy the book and learn from it.

The Supreme Court of Missouri



All About Me

My birthday is _____

The name of my school is _____

I am in grade _____

My teachers' names are _____

My favorite subject is _____

My hobbies are _____

The people I live with are _____

Something else I want to say about myself _____

What Courts Do

Have you ever played a game and needed someone to help make sure everyone followed the rules?

In Missouri, we have special places called courts that help people solve problems or disagreements.

Imagine you and your friend both want the last piece of cake and can't agree who should have it. In real life, if people can't solve their problems, they would go to court.

The disagreement between two or more people is called a case. Judges and lawyers are people that help everyone follow the rules and the law so things stay fair and safe. A law is a special rule everyone must follow. For example, it is against the law to take something from a store without paying for it.

Everyone in Missouri has a court they can go to for help.

On My Way To Court

These are the rules of the game:

Be the first player to get to the courthouse by following one of the paths.

1–4 players can play.

Use coins, paperclips, or erasers as game pieces.

Drop 3 extra coins on a flat surface.

Count the number of heads and move ahead that number.

If there are 1 head and 2 tails,
move forward 1 space.

If there are 2 heads and 1 tail,
move forward 2 spaces.

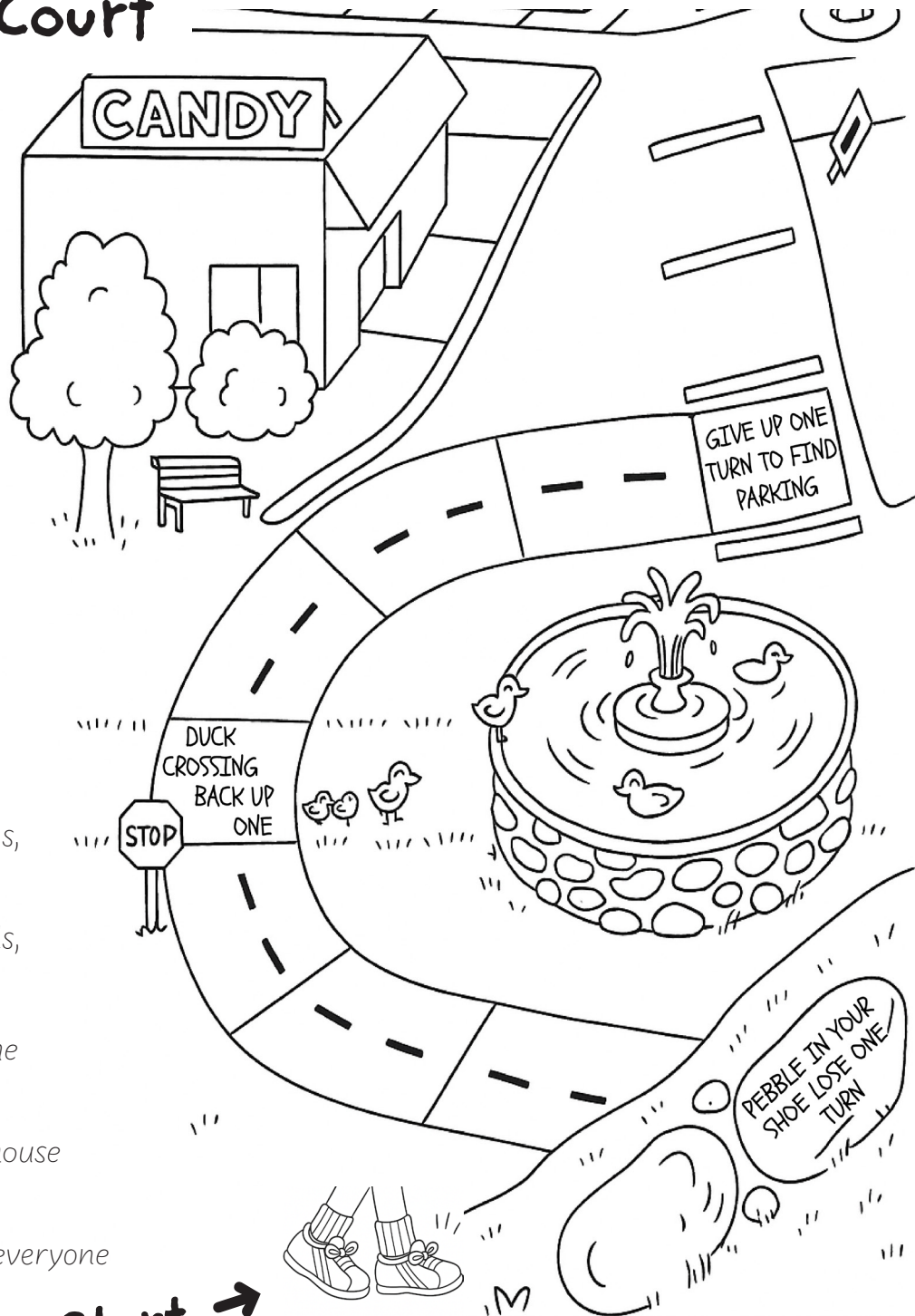
If there are 3 heads and no tails,
move forward 3 spaces.

If there are no heads and 3 tails,
do not move.

When you land on a space, follow the directions on that space.

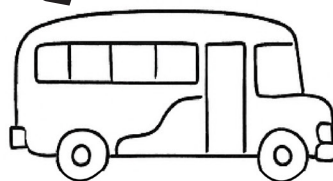
The first player to get to the courthouse wins.

At the end of the game, make sure everyone gets their game pieces back.

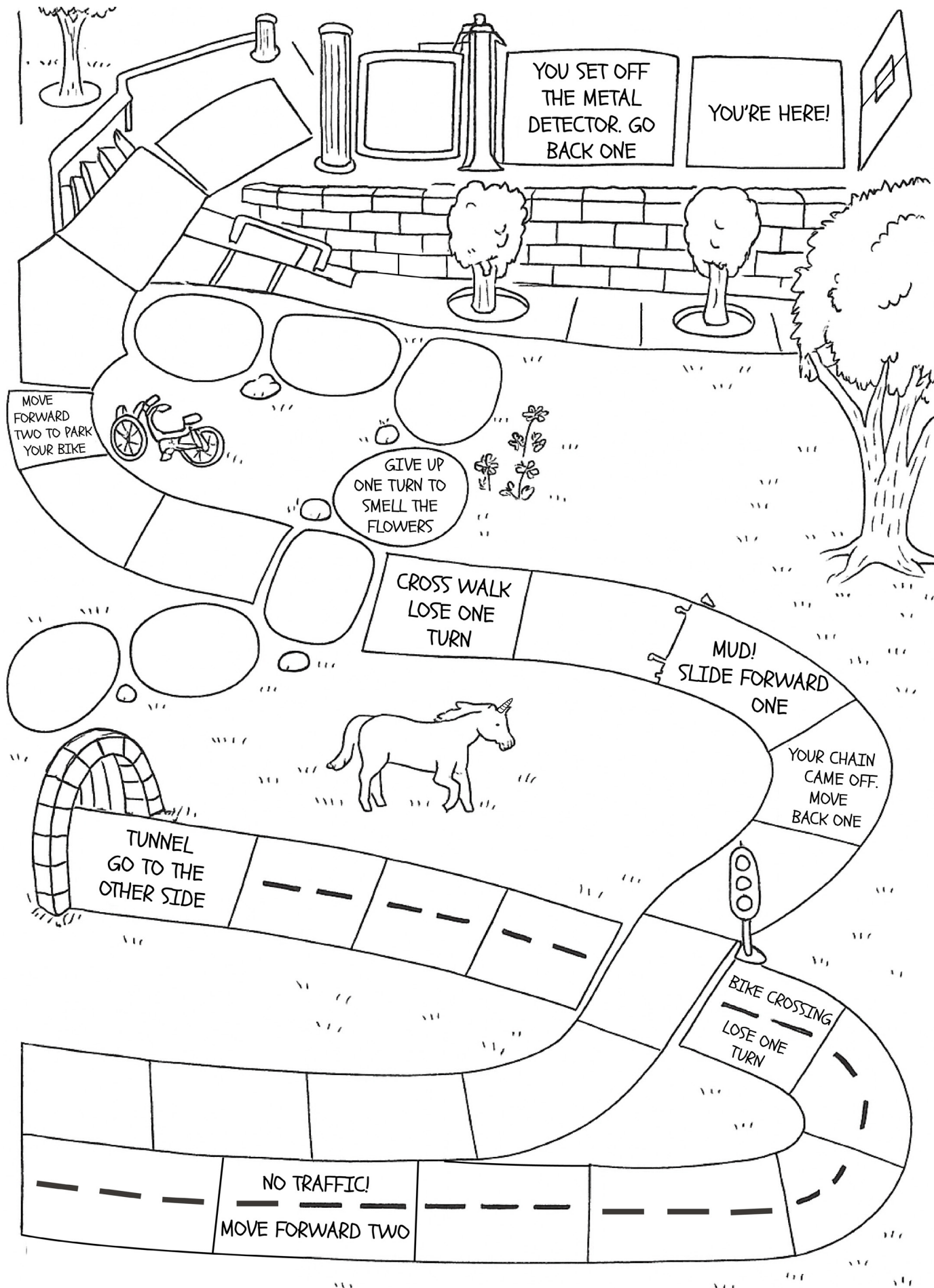


Circle on the game all the things you saw on your way to court today. If you saw a bicycle, then circle the bicycle. If you saw something that isn't shown, draw a picture of it on the game.

Start
Here



—	—	—



Why am I Here?

Check the box that tells why you are at court today,
then color the pictures.



I am at court today with



I am at court today on a field trip
with _____



☐ I am here to tell what I have seen
or heard or to listen to what others
have to say about a case.



☐ I do not know why I am at court.



Who Are the People in Court?

Many people work in a court. Everyone has a special job.

The **Judge** wears a black robe and sits at the front of the courtroom at a big desk called a **bench**.

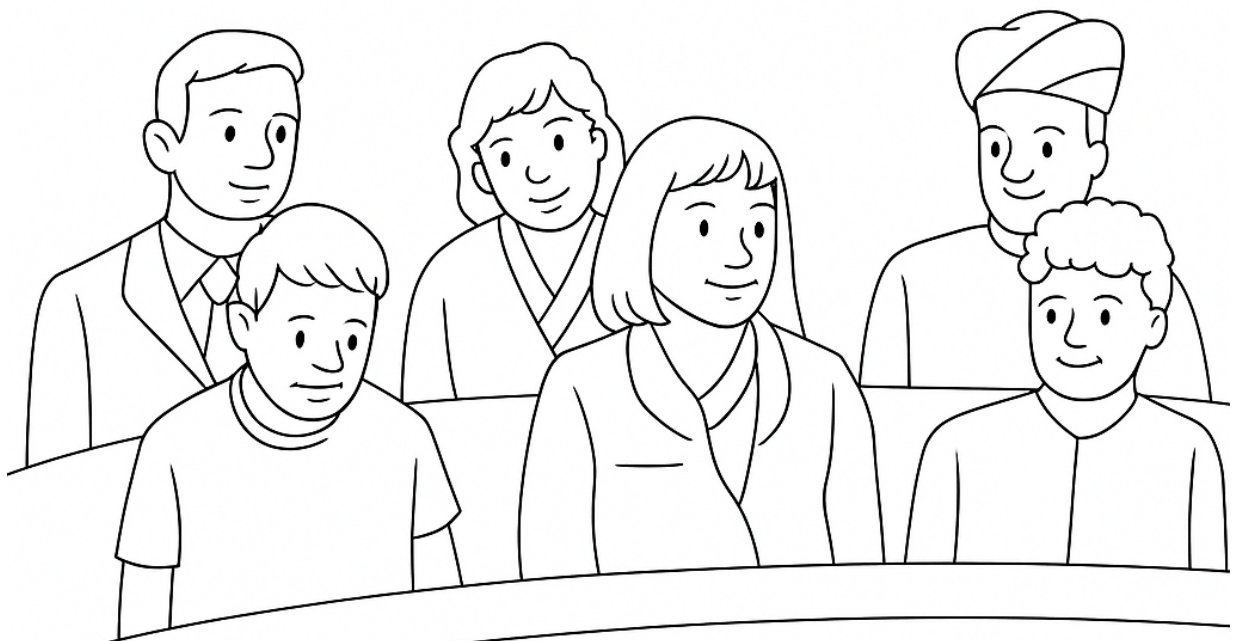
The judge is like a referee at a ball game. The judge makes sure that everyone plays by the rules.



The Judge also decides who wins the argument.

For example, if two people come to court because they don't agree about money, the judge will decide who gets the money.

Sometimes, a group of people called **jurors** decides who wins. Jurors listen to both sides of the story and then decide what is fair. A group of jurors is called a **jury**.



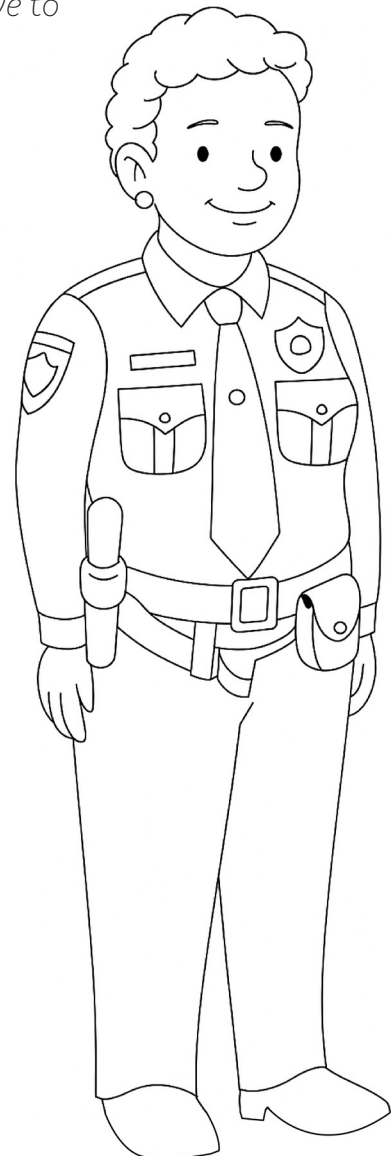


People in court may have **lawyers**, also called **attorneys**. Lawyers go to school to learn about the law. They help people understand their case and tell the judge or jury what the law says.

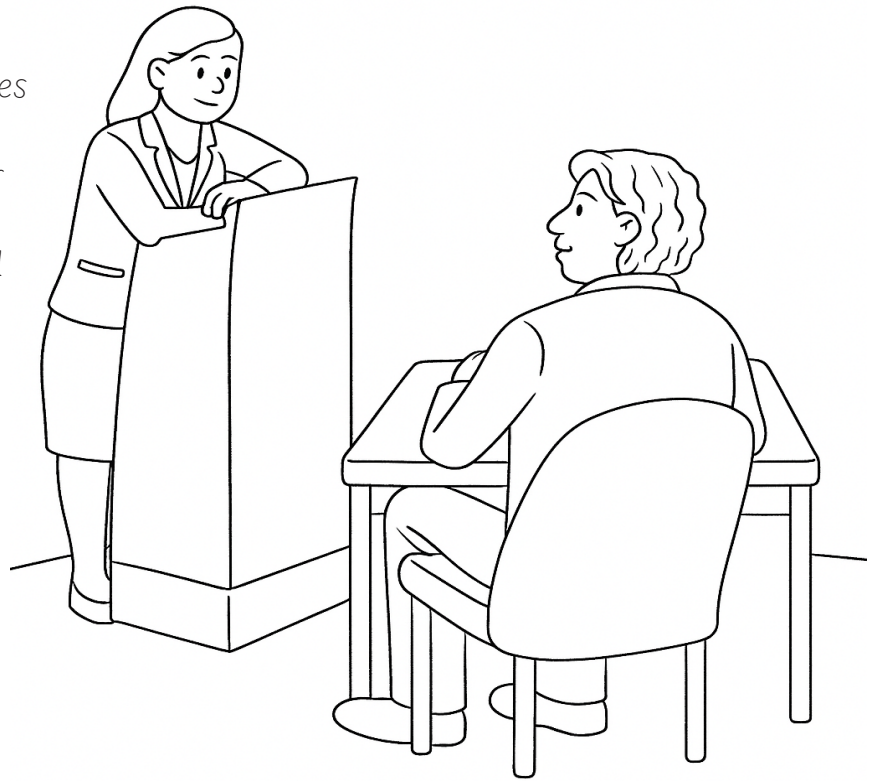
Lawyers can bring people to court to tell what they have seen or heard. Even kids can have lawyers, but you don't have to have one to go to court.

The **bailiff** makes sure everyone follows the rules and stays safe. The bailiff usually wears a uniform like a police officer.

Interpreters help people who don't speak English understand what is said in court.



The **court reporter** writes down everything people say in court. The reporter sits near the judge and types very fast on a small machine. Everyone has to speak slowly and clearly so the reporter can write what they say.

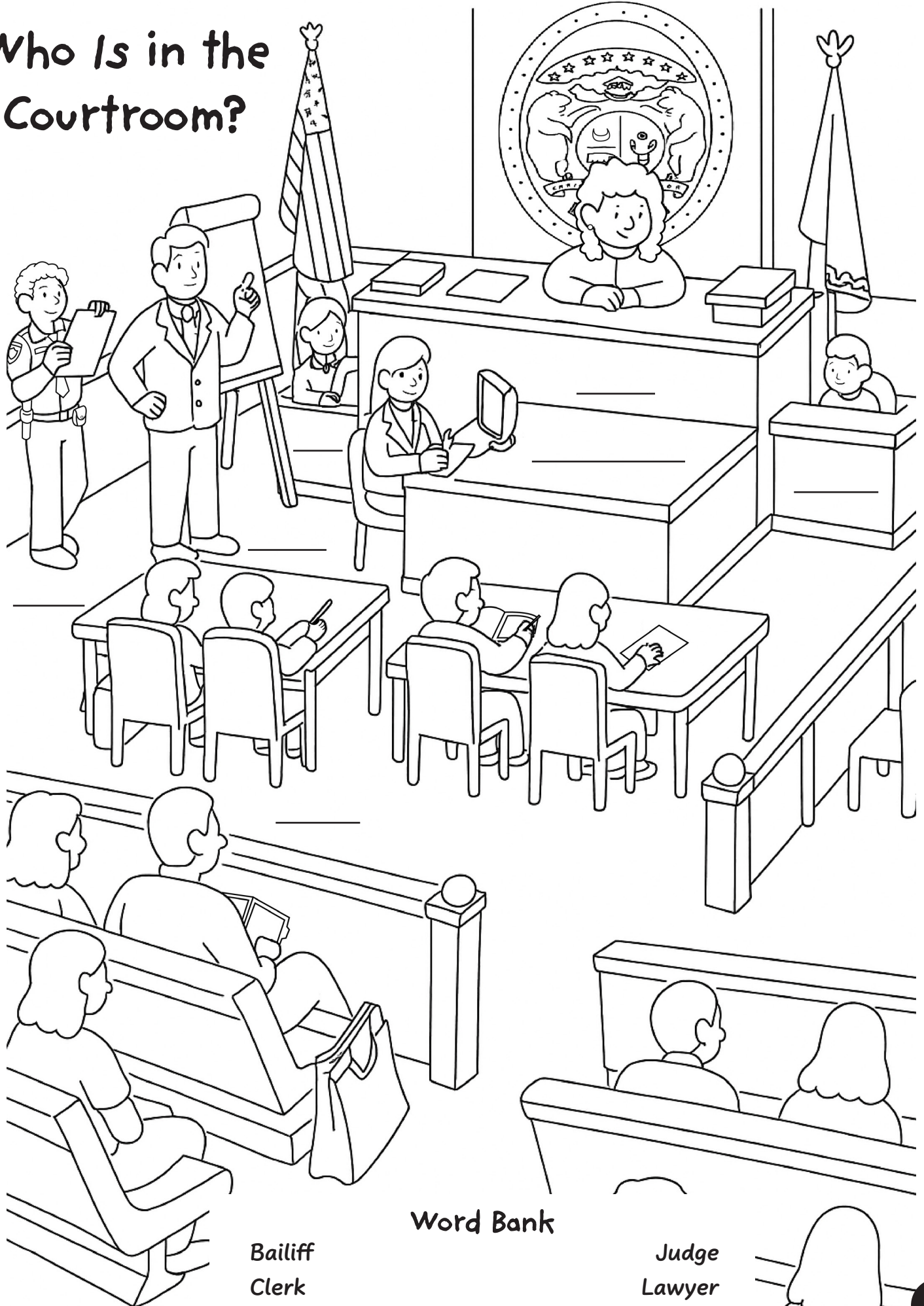


The court **clerk** keeps all the papers about the cases and helps organize them. The clerk also keeps track of what the judge decides and makes the court's schedule.

Witnesses are people who come to court to tell what they saw or heard. Before they talk, witnesses raise their hands and make a promise called an oath to tell the truth. They sit in a special seat and answer questions from lawyers or the judge. Some cases have one witness, and some have many.



Who Is in the Courtroom?



Word Bank

Bailiff
Clerk
Court Reporter

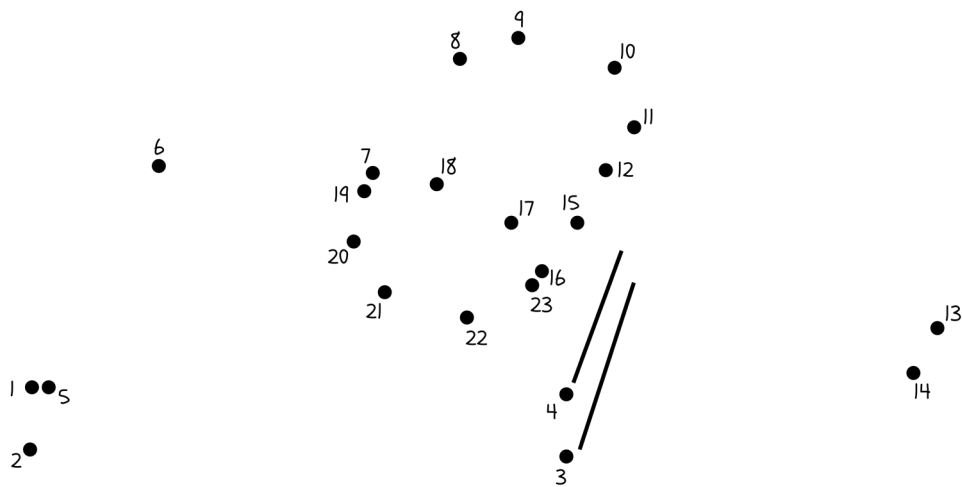
Judge
Lawyer
Witness

How do I Act in Court?

- Be on time, clean, and dressed nicely.
- Be polite and use good manners.
- Don't eat or drink in court.
- No headphones, and turn off your phone unless the judge says you can use it.
- Be quiet and wait your turn to talk.
- You can read a book or play quietly while you wait.
- If you don't understand something, say so. Someone will explain it to you.

Connect the Dots

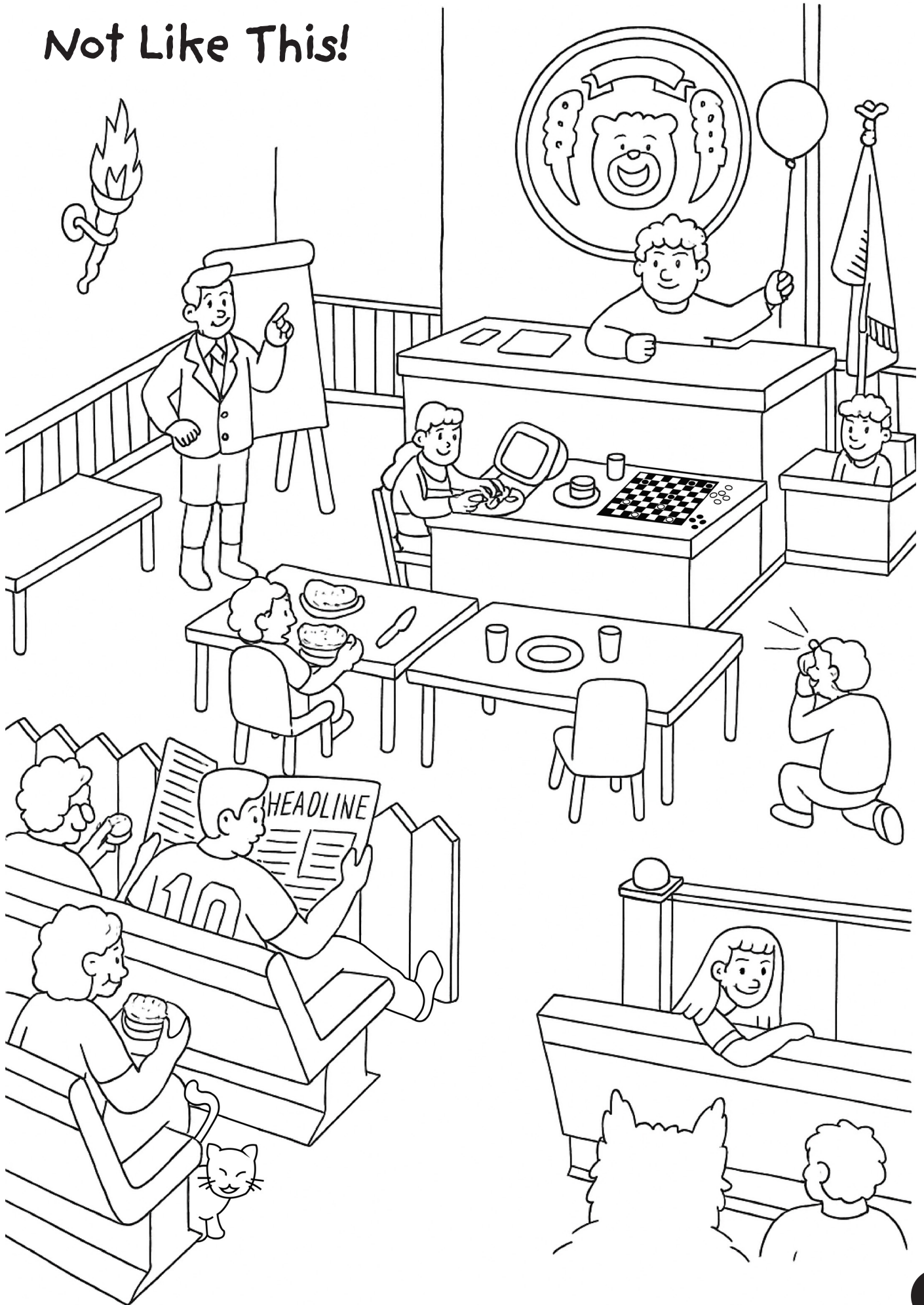
A judge bangs a gavel to get people's attention when someone doesn't act right in court.



What's Wrong with This Picture? →

Circle the things in the picture that are not ok to do in court.

Not Like This!

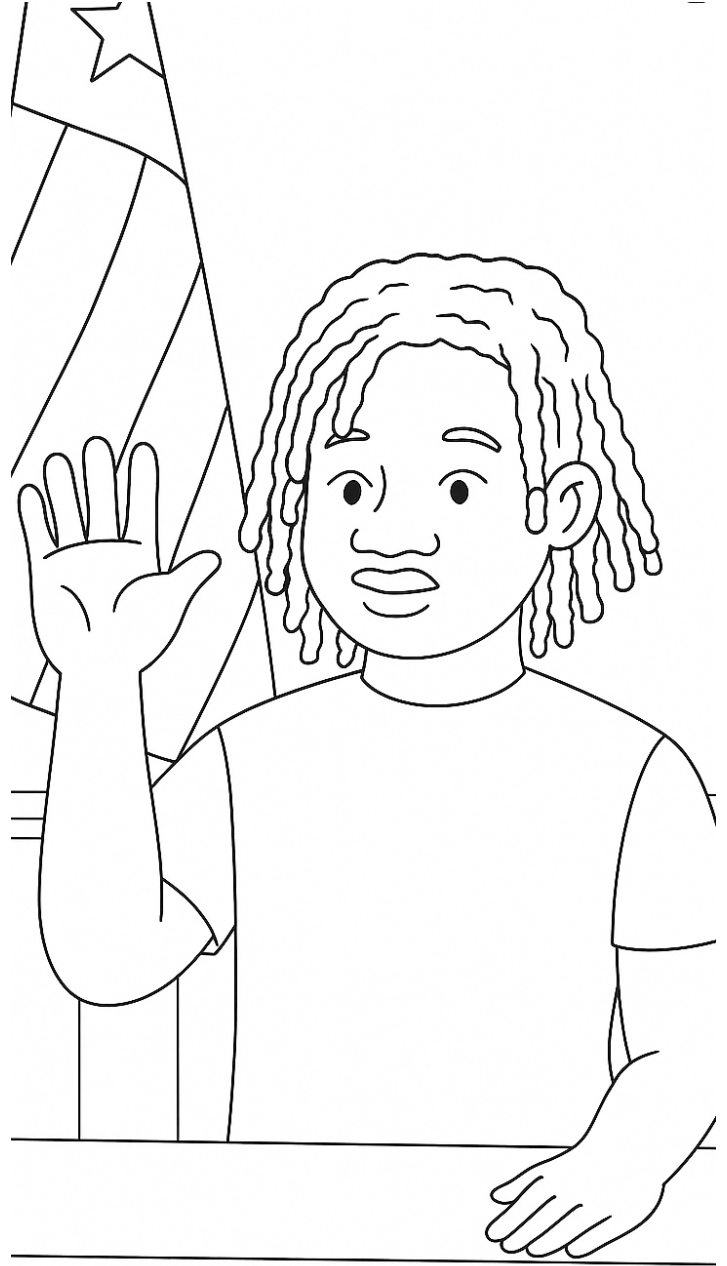


I Am a Witness

You learned about **witnesses** before! Kids can go to court and sometimes they can be witnesses too. The most important thing for you to do is to tell the truth.

If you don't remember the answer to a question, just say, "I don't remember." If you don't know the answer, you can say, "I don't know." If you don't understand a question, tell the judge or lawyer. That's OK! The judge will help you.

Sometimes kids feel scared to go to court. That's OK too. Just remember, the judge is there to make sure everything is fair and that no one is mean to you.



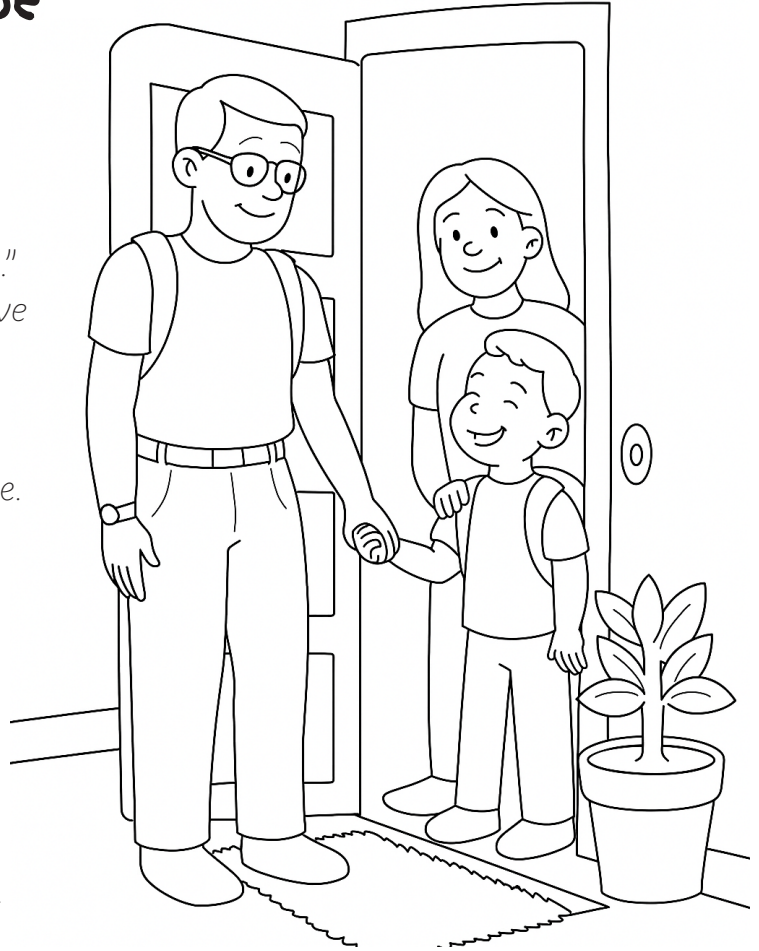
Juvenile Court

Sometimes Kids need to be taken care of

Sometime kids come to court because a mom, dad, or another adult has hurt them or didn't take care of them. This is called "juvenile court." If a child isn't safe at home, the child might have to live with a grandparent or another family for a while. This is called a **foster care family**.

Usually, parents want their child to come home. The judge and helpers work with the parents to make their home healthy and safe. If parents make the home safe, the child can move back home.

If parents can't make the home safe, the judge might help find another home where the child can grow up. When a child joins a new family forever, it's called **adoption**. The judge decides if adoption is best for the child. People adopt children because they love them and want them in their family.



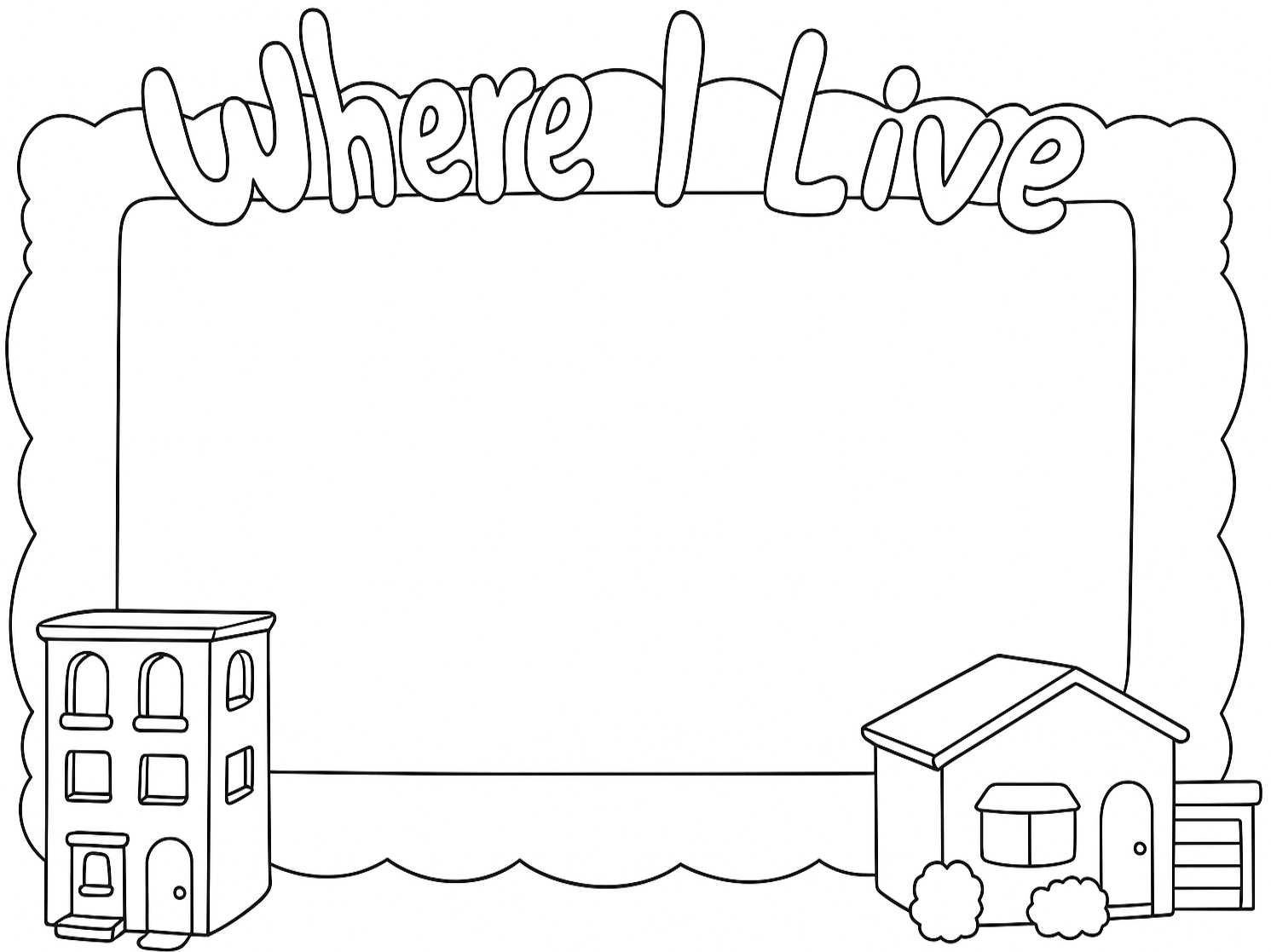
What Does the Children's Division Worker and Juvenile Officer Do in Juvenile Court?

Children's Division (CD) workers and Juvenile Officers (JO) help keep kids safe. They talk to families and help the judge decide what's best for the child.

What Does the Judge do in Juvenile Court?

Judges in juvenile court do the same things judges always do, but there is no jury. The judge listens to everyone and decides what will keep the child safe.

If the judge asks you something, it's important to tell the truth so the judge can make the best choice for you.



Draw a picture of the place you live.

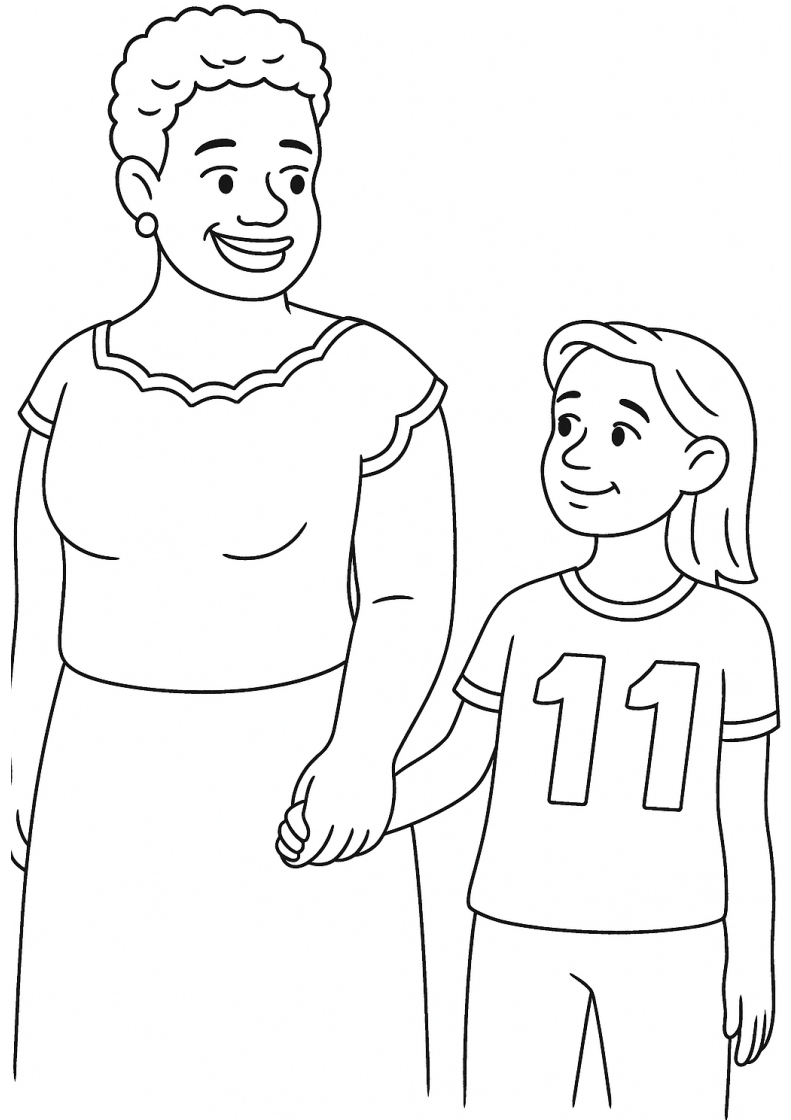
What Do Lawyers Do in Juvenile Court?

Lawyers in juvenile court help people talk to the judge. Each person might have a lawyer who helps them in court.

What Does a “Guardian ad Litem” Do in Court?

A special lawyer called a **guardian ad litem** (GAL) helps the judge know what is best for the child.

The GAL talks to kids, parents, and others, then tells the judge what they learn. The GAL listens to children and shares their story in court.



Family Court

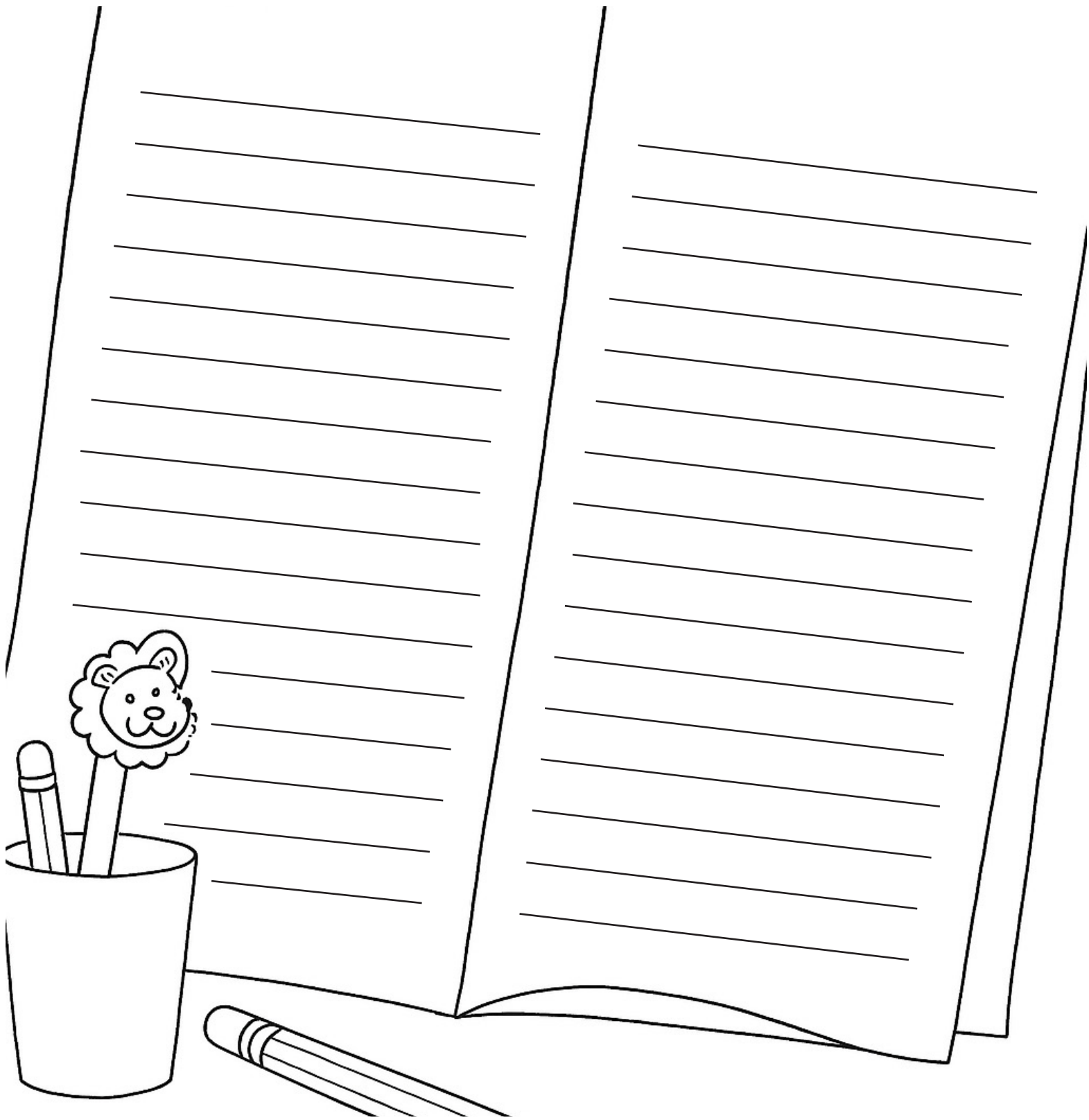
Sometimes parents decide they can't live together anymore. If they are married and don't want to be married anymore, they can go to court to get a **legal separation** or a **divorce**. In court cases, lawyers help parents make a plan for taking care of their children and how to share their things. The judge makes the final decision for everyone.

Lots of kids have parents who go to family court. Most of the time, kids don't have to go to court, but sometimes they do. If you do, remember—it's not because you did something wrong.

Courts are different than other places, but you don't need to be scared. If you feel nervous, talk to your parents or GAL.

When parents don't live together, they need to make a plan for when you'll stay with each parent. This plan is called a **parenting plan**.



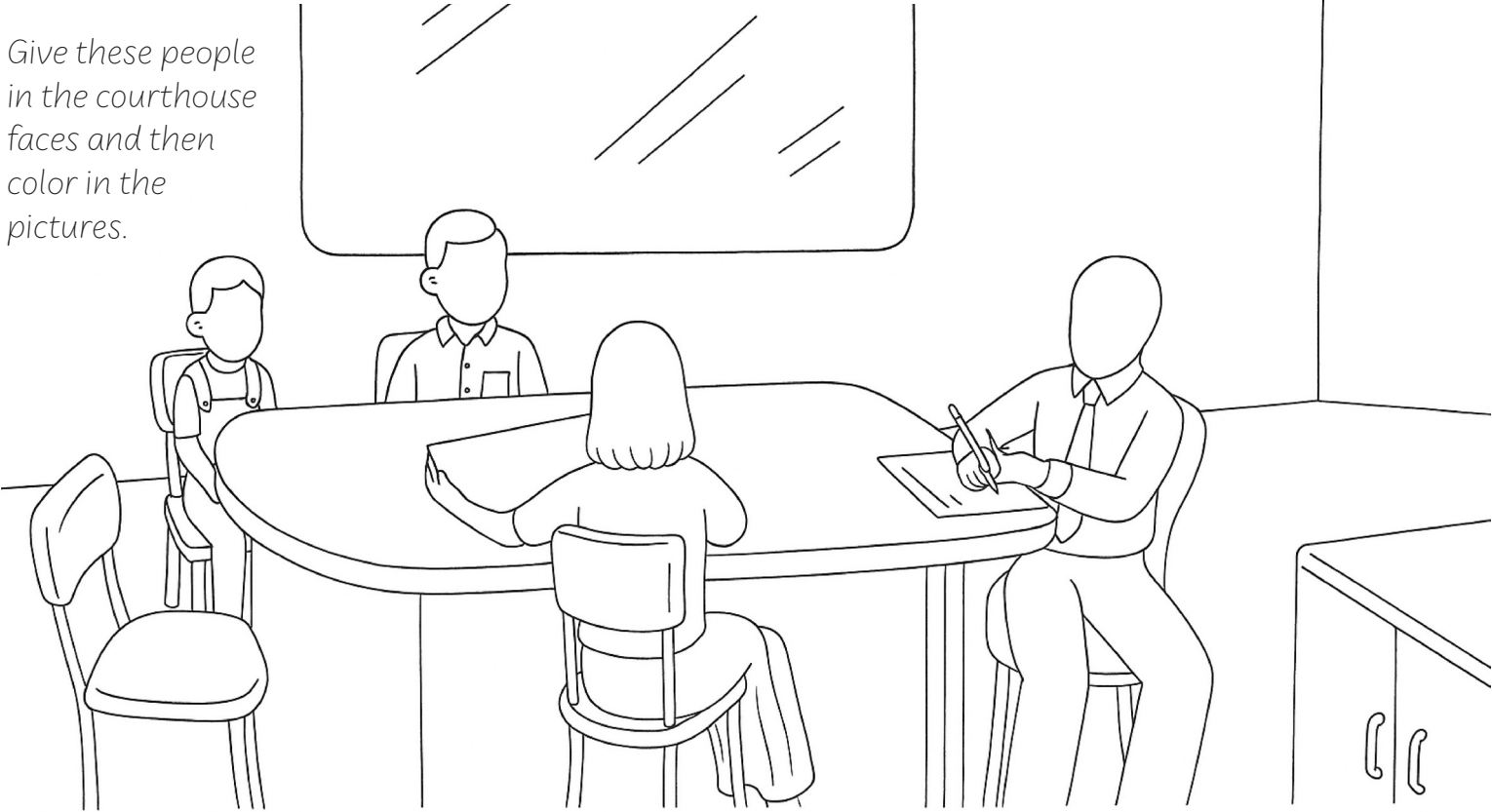


Write a story about a person going to family court.

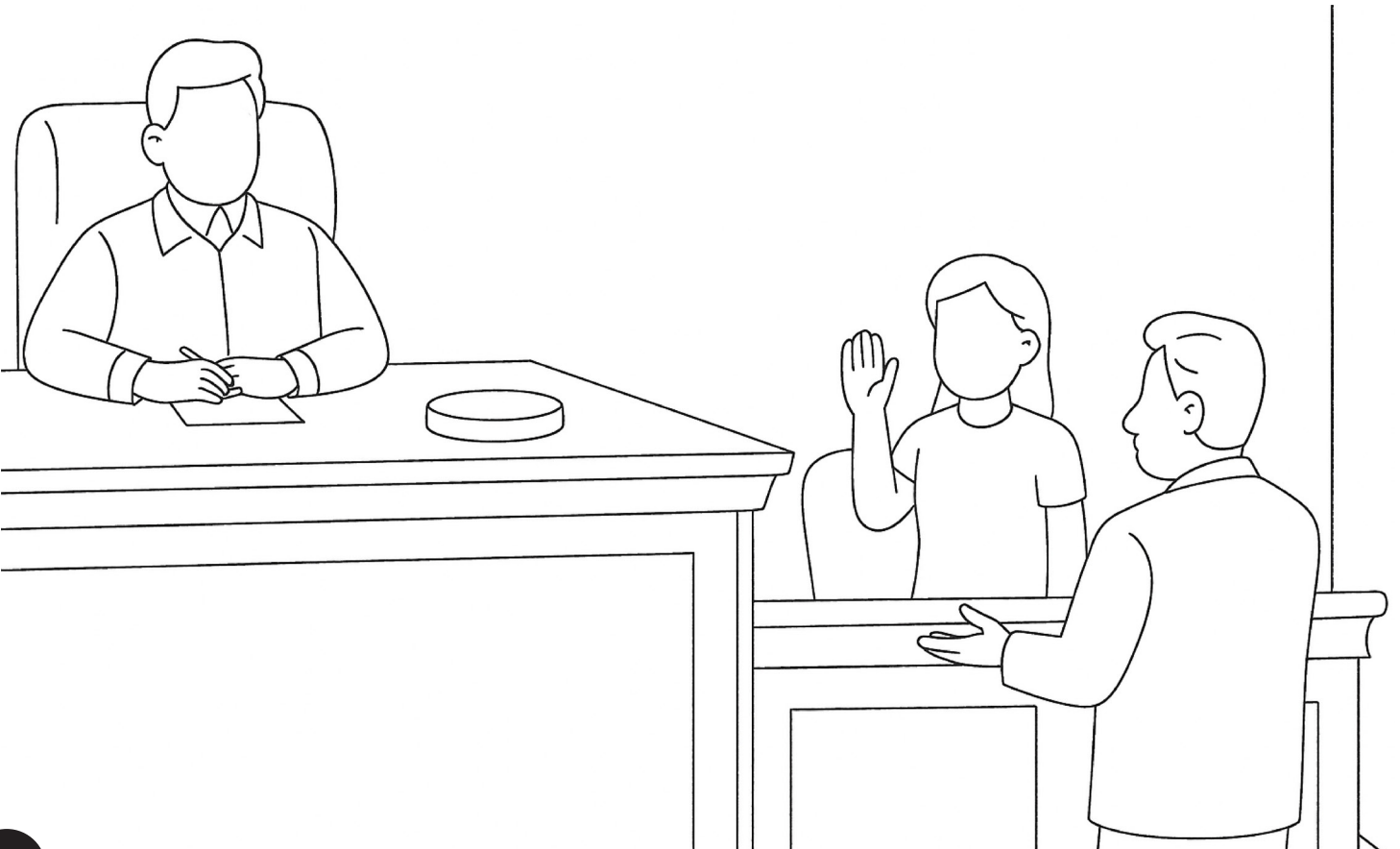
Maybe you know someone who went to family court to fix a problem.

Courthouse Rooms to Decorate

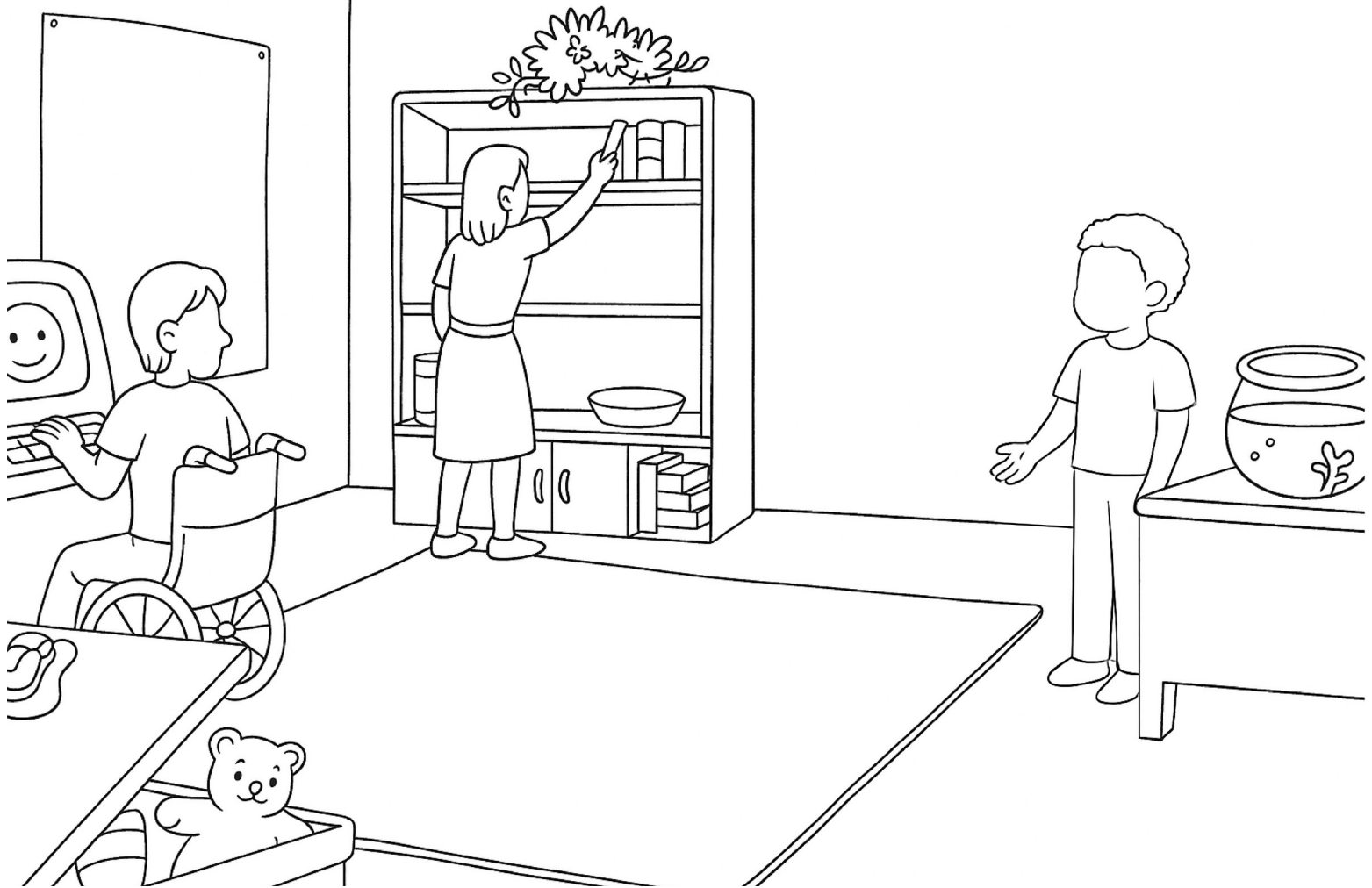
Give these people in the courthouse faces and then color in the pictures.



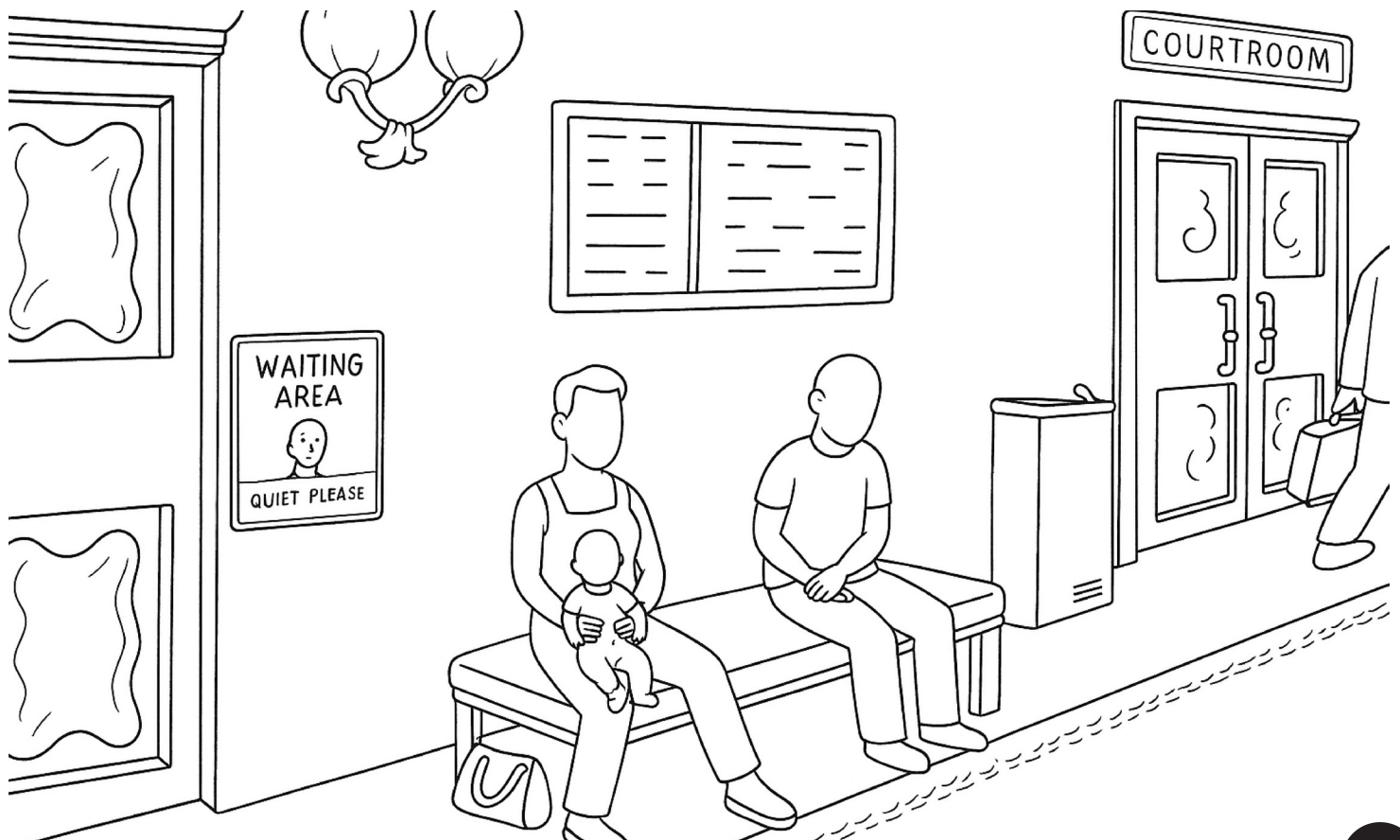
a child gets ready for court with the child's attorney



in the courtroom, the judge listens to a witness being sworn in



a children's waiting room in the courthouse



waiting their turn outside the courtroom

Who are the People You Are Connected To?

Draw them or write their names.

